

March 13, 2022

To members of the Judiciary Committee:

I am writing **IN SUPPORT** of:

- [S.B. No. 387](#) AN ACT CONCERNING THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUVENILE JUSTICE POLICY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE.
- [S.B. No. 392](#) AN ACT CONCERNING STATEMENTS MADE BY JUVENILES.

I am writing **IN STRONG OPPOSITION** to the following bills:

- [S.B. No. 365](#) AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORMS
- [S.B. No. 388](#): AN ACT CONCERNING THE DEFENSE OF A PERSON OR A PERSON'S DWELLING, PLACE OF WORK OR MOTOR VEHICLE.
- [H.B. No. 5418](#) AN ACT REVISING JUVENILE AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE STATUTES AND INSURANCE STATUTES CONCERNING THEFT OF A MOTOR VEHICLE
- [H.B. No. 5417](#) AN ACT CONCERNING JUVENILE JUSTICE AND SERVICES AND FIREARMS BACKGROUND CHECKS.
- [S.B. No. 386](#) AN ACT CONCERNING A STUDY OF THE JUVENILE DELINQUENCY LAWS OF THIS STATE.
- [S.B. No. 16](#) AN ACT ADDRESSING GUN VIOLENCE AND JUVENILE CRIME

My name is Valerie Triblets. I am a suburban, white woman, an unaffiliated voter, someone who has supported both Republican and Democratic leadership, and I've had enough.

I am tired of being used as a tool to hurt Black and Brown families. I am tired of aging, white men clinging to power, and racist systems, who live in fear of change. I am tired of listening to coded language and ignorance from people who have spent 2 years of a pandemic sowing misunderstanding and hate while failing to spend any time learning about the necessity of social change.

Let me be crystal clear. I do not like crime. I have been a crime victim. I have empathy for crime victims. I want to prevent more victims. The way to prevent crime is to address the cause of crime, not to put more children into jail cells.

The Moral panic over a manufactured crime crisis created by Republican leadership in Connecticut over the past months is racist. This crisis is a historically, predictable

response because those in power fear the change in our country. We have been here before.

There is no data to support the “crisis” and no data to support the “solutions” offered by these bills. Research by the TOW institute indicates there is no “significant increase in overall juvenile crime in recent years, including motor vehicle thefts.” The proposed legislation is nothing more than a strategy to claim a “tough on crime” narrative to preach to the suburbs during next year’s election while sacrificing a rare opportunity to get to the root of the struggles faced by the poor in our communities. These bills will funnel money into prisons and systems that we know harm Black and Brown children. We KNOW that they are systemically racist systems.

We know, from data and experience, that harsher punishment increases recidivism. We know that poverty is at the root of the trauma. We know that trauma has a neurological impact on the brain that leads to impulsive behavior and bad decisions. We know that our brains do not fully develop until we reach our mid-twenties. I know, from 8 years of experience caring for men and women released from prison, that childhood trauma is consistently part of their stories.

The crisis facing our state is poverty. We must take this opportunity to engage our communities in real change and meaningful solutions. Every Justice organization in Connecticut is aware of programs and systems that currently exist but are underfunded. Let us use the knowledge and experience we have to properly intervene in the real crisis of poverty and support affordable housing, improve education and properly fund systems of intervention, mental health care, mentorship, and recreation.

Men and women of the Judiciary Committee I ask you these questions. Why are you willing to react so quickly to a manufactured crisis in the suburbs? Why do you diminish the urgency of the crisis of poverty faced by constituents in our urban communities? Why do we continue to force people of color to put their trauma on display so we can recognize their humanity?

Enough.

Sincerely,

Valerie Triblets
2 Belden Lane
Rocky Hill CT 06067

